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SUITCASE (TRAVEL CASE, TRAVEL BAG),
REMOVABLE PROTECTIVE COVER.

This invention relates to an exterior, removable, washable, protective covering for a suitcase (travel case, travel bag).

A suitcase (travel case or travel bag), is a well known item used for the storage and transportation of personal property. This is subject to rough handling and soiling, causing damage, discolouring and unsightly markings, resulting in possible permanent disfigurement to the aforementioned item. Once damaged in any of the above forms, the suitcase (travelcase or travel bag) is likely to be discarded by the owner, since its original appearance cannot be restored at least without considerable expence.

The cover when fitted will prevent the suitcase from opening should the closing mechanism fail, stopping spillage of the contents. Previously damaged or unsightly suitcases can be given a new lease of life by using an attractive protective cover. From an environmental viewpoint, fewer suitcases will now be discarded reducing waste. Fewer insurance claims will be submitted reducing agrivation and lost time incured by individuals, plus insurance companies saving money.

This invention will utilise a strong fabric of natural, or man made fibres, fabricated (sewn) to form the external shape of the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag), so that it provides a snug fit around the item to be protected. A range of sizes to suit standard suitcases will be available for manufacturing purposes. Appertures in this protective cover shall allow permanent fixtures of the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag), such as mobility wheels and pull handles on the side of the item, if any, to be accesible whilst the protective cover is in place. A protective cover without appertures will be used if the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) does not have any additional fixtures used for mobility.

A drawstring, or a drawstring with clamping toggle, shall be run along the hem of the opening of the protective cover to enable closure of the protective cover around the suitcase to be protected, with additional clasps for a more secure closure. A zip fastener, velcroe, buttons, buckled straps or a combination of these shall also be used to seal the cover, as alternatives to using drawstrings.

The protective cover will provide protection of suitcases (travelcases, travelbags) against scratching or staining normaly sustained whilst travelling. The cover can then be removed and washed for reuse. The protective cover is not intended to eliminate damage caused by severe mishandling, heavy impacts, saturation in fluids, heat or fire exposure. Neither will it prevent physical damage to exposed mobile fixtures appearing through the appertures.

A specific embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings.

Figure 1 shows a typical suitcase with made to measure protective cover alongside (Drawstring with toggle version, incorporating two additional clasps one either side of the top handle). The cover is shown free standing, only for the purpose of clearly illustrating it, in reality the cover cannot stand as shown since it is made of a non rigid fabric.

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Figure 2 illustrates the protective cover correctly oriented to slide with a close fit over the suitcase.

Figure 3 shows the suitcase fully enclosed within the protective cover, with fixtures protruding through the appertures.

Figure 4 shows the drawstrings and toggle adjusted in the cover closed position, with the two clasps also in the closed position.

Referring to the drawing ,the protective cover 1, shall be able to be slid over the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) to be protected, by means of an opening in one end of the cover sufficient in size to accept the item in a certain direction.

If the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) has mobility wheels and side mounted pull handles, correct orientation of the protective cover is necessary to position the appertures 2 + 3 whilst fitting the protective cover 1, to the item to be protected, as illustrated in figure 2.

If the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) does not have mobility fixtures, then particular orientation whilst fitting the protective cover 1, is not necessary (as the cover will not have appertures in this case), other than ensuring the correct dimensions of the cover are matched to the same dimensions of the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) that the cover has been designed for.

The protective cover 1, must be pulled over the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) until the mobility wheels and side mounted pull handle, are positioned so that the appertures 2+3, are correctly placed over these fixtures, as shown in figure 3. The cut and fabrication of the cover 1, is such that it is close fitting without any excess material being visible, nor will it be stretched to tightly over the protected items.

When the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) is completely enclosed within the protective cover 1, drawstrings 5, threaded through a hem in the opening of the protective cover 1, shall be drawn by means of a toggle 4, thus sealing the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) within the protective cover 1, as shown in figure 4.

The drawstring 5, will then be secured and prevented from reopening by the toggle 4, or by simply introducing a knot. This will then be tucked inside the protective cover 1, so as not to trail free. Two clasps 6, positioned one either side of the handle shall then also be fastened to provide extra security to the closure of the protective cover 1.

Removal of the cover 1, is accomplished by opening the clasps 6 and slackening the toggle 4, back to the end of the drawstring 5, simply enlarging the protective covering 1, to its fully open size, then sliding the cover 1, off the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag).

The protective cover 1, can then be folded and stored until required.

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CLAIMS

1 An exterior, removable, washable, protective cover for a suitcase (travelcase or travelbag). The cover being designed to form the exterior shape of the aforementioned item, sealing it within, without being too tight or allowing any excess material forming the cover to be visible. Neither would this protective cover restrict any operation of the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag), apart from the suitcase being unable to be opened whilst the cover is in place. This however prevents accidental opening of the suitcase should the locking mechanism of the suitcase fail.

2 A protective cover as claimed in claim 1 with apertures allowing access and freedom of movement to any fixtures required for mobility of the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) whilst the cover is fitted.

3 A protective cover as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, which utilises a drawstring, a drawstring and toggle, zipper, velcro, buttons, buckled straps, clasps or a combination of these in order to maintain a closure of the protective cover.

4 A protective cover as claimed in claim 1-3, that will help minimize staining, marking or scratching of a suitcase (travelcase or travelbag) sustained during storage or transportation, made of a natural or manmade fibre, such that it can then be removed and is possible to wash for future use. From an environmental viewpoint this extends the useful life of the suitcase (travelcase or travelbag).

5 An exterior, washable, removable, protective cover for a suitcase (travelcase or travelbag), as described herein with reference to figures 1-4 of the accompanying drawing.

Patents Act 1977

Examiner's report to the Comptroller under
Section 17 (The Search Report)

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Relevant Technical fields

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Search Examiner

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Databases (see over)

(i) UK Patent Office

(ii)

Date of Search

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Documents considered relevant following a search in respect of claims

1-5

Category (see over)	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)
X	GB 2221833 A (BATO) whole document	1,3
X	GB 2167656 A (BATTYE) whole document	1-4
X	GB 2147497 A (PORTER) whole document	1,3
X	US 3901360 (COOK) whole document	1-4
X	US 2724467 (JAFFE) whole document	1,3

Category	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)

Categories of documents

X: Document indicating lack of novelty or of inventive step.

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Databases: The UK Patent Office database contains documents from the following sources: